2:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1939
FQ5 Bemba FQ5

dishes they use the word *ukukauka*, meaning to be sharp and acid, like lemon-juice, in the mouth,[1] but very few acid fruits were eaten before the introduction of different citrus trees by the white man. Children eat lemons unsweetened and enjoy the bite of the acid, unlike most Europeans. The word *ukusasa* is used of foods that have gone sour or fermented, like beer a few days old, while *ukulula* describes the bitter taste of some of the wild spinaches which the women try to make more palatable with the addition of potash salts (*ifishikisa*) prepared from bush plants or ground-nut sauce. Sweet foods, in the sense of those with a sugary taste, are rare, though honey is sometimes found and is considered a great delicacy, and the stalk of the sweet sorghum (*icisale*) is chewed by children. The fruit of the *umupundu* and the *umusuku* trees are also sweetish. But sweetness in the sense that we understand it is not a term that could be applied to any Bemba dish, and the word *ukuloa* which is used to translate the English 'sweet' really means to be pleasant or palatable. Sugar becomes almost a necessity when natives have become accustomed to it, and the children brought up in urban areas where it is the fashion to use it, find it impossible for a time to eat *ubwali* without it when they are sent back to their own villages.[2] Strong tastes such as ginger root, peppermint, aromatic or hot flavours apparently do not exist, except for the pepper known as *mpilipili*, which is occasionally dried and used as a relish and described as making the mouth hot.[3] In fact, strong tastes are definitely not characteristic of Bemba diet.

(*b*) *Salt hunger*. Of the special cravings recognized by the Bemba the longing for salt is probably the most pronounced. Salt has always been hard to get in this country, and meat and other foods richly supplied with it are rare. In the old days the natural salt found in the pans at Mpika[4] and crystallized out into roundish lumps was among the few goods traded about the country. These salt balls were valued so highly that they were used as tribute to be given to chiefs, who themselves distributed them as rewards to faithful followers. To a certain extent they do so still. The process of evaporating salt from river grasses is

[1] E. B. H. Goodall adds 'salty': *Some Wemba Words*, p. 44.

[2] It is interesting to note that honey is considered bad for a sick person because it 'makes the heart beat fast'.

[3] This is in marked difference to W. African diets, where most dishes of stew are highly seasoned with peppers of different kinds.

[4] Cf. Appendix B for composition.

widely reputed for their iron-working, when during the recent war tools became scarce. It is rarely found among the Bemba. Village smiths able to reforge and sharpen axe-blades and hoes are, however, common all over the area. The Unga obtained iron blades for their fish-spears from the Mukulu. 325

Wood-carving, highly developed among the Congo peoples, is limited among the Bemba to the simplest geometric designs, but Von Rosen noted some elaborate and rather striking carving among the Twa.(1) Weaving is unknown among the Bemba, and is not reported elsewhere. Baskets are generally made well but are not elaborate. For a fishing group the Unga have little variety in baskets and these again are simply made. A certain amount of leather-work is made by the Bemba. Both cooking and eating pots are made all over the plateau, but although they are well made they tend to be badly fired and hence to be fragile. 322 286 285 281 323

Salt-making flourishes particularly among the Shila and Tabwa, around Lake Mweru.(2) It is highly lucrative, compensates for the comparative infertility of the soil and provides a lively marketing activity. The salt is obtained by straining the soil through baskets and boiling the resultant brine. The salt-earth supply in the area is permanent and this tends to have a stabilizing effect upon villages, which would otherwise move frequently in accordance with the practice of shifting cultivation. The natural salt found in the pans at Mpika in Bemba country was also utilized and highly valued, being traded around the country to gratify the longing for salt in which the Bemba diet is singularly lacking. 317

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

KINSHIP

(a) *Matrilineal Descent* is one of the cultural characteristics of this area. Amongst all these people affiliation is traced through the mother and a man belongs to his mother's clan. Succession is within a loosely organised matrilineage of narrow span whereby a man is succeeded by his younger brothers or by his sisters' sons, or by his sisters' daughters' sons. These rules govern succession to chieftainship, to a headmanship, or to the name and status of a dead man by the practice known in this area as *ukupyanika*.(3) A woman usually succeeds to the name of her maternal grandmother and, in the case of a chieftainess, she succeeds to the title itself. Succession to a name is associated with the power to call on the ancestral spirits of the dead man or woman in question. 611

All the peoples described appear to be organized into matrilineal clans with totemic names. Among the Bemba, for instance, there are 40 or more such dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The clan claims descent from an original ancestress, a more or less legendary figure dating from the time of the first occupation of their present territory by the Bemba. Clan centres, in the sense of original villages of occupation, are remembered but 614

(1) Von Rosen, 1914. (2) Moore 1937.
(3) Richards, 9, 1950, describes this as 'positional succession'.

grown extensively in the past and some Kazembes[1] were acknowledged hashish-addicts. 276

TRADE

Slaves and ivory (exchanged for cloth and merchandise) were for a long period the main trading assets of the country.(2) Salt, otter-skins and beeswax(3) were other traded commodities. The valley fish used to be exchanged for the mushrooms, honey and wild fruits of the plateau. It is still bartered with the Lungu *citemene* cultivators for millet, from which hot beer (*katubi*) is brewed. Trade with the Swahili, Arab and European merchants was the Kazembe's monopoly.(4) Ivory came mostly from the Congo side of the Luapula being brought as tribute.(5) Fish, the chief export article at the present time, is marketed in the mining areas of the Belgian Congo, only a small proportion going to the Rhodesian Copperbelt.(6) Kasenga, with its ice factory and road connection with Elisabethville, is the local distribution centre. Small quantities of cassava and bananas are also offered for sale there. 439

ECONOMIC CHANGE

Labour migration to the mines and sales of fish are the most noticeable signs of economic change. Subsistence agriculture prevails although, with the establishment of co-operative farms, the growing of cash crops may develop. 178

CRAFTS

Iron-ore, abundant in the hillside country to the east, was smelted and iron was worked(7) until the advent of the British South Africa Company. Imported trade goods have since displaced native-made hoes, axe-heads, knives and spears. 325

Cotton spinning and weaving are other crafts which have fallen into decay.(8) The rough cotton cloth mentioned by Livingstone(9) is no longer made. Mats woven from reeds, papyrus and the leaf of the *mukalala* palm and split bamboo baskets are still made by men after the rains when the fishing season is over.(10) Pottery-making was confined to women. The men worked wood and leather, dressed skins and prepared barkcloth. They hollowed dugouts, carved wooden plates and crudely finished figures of ritual significance.(11) Dyes were procured from plants and trees and a tree-bark infusion was used in treating wounds.(12) Potash salt was extracted from plant ashes.(13) The method widely used among the Tabwa and Bena Kabwili on the north-eastern fringe of Lake Mweru,(14) where a brownish salt is obtained by filtering water through salpetrous earth and evaporating the brine,(15) may also have been employed. 28 32 [386] [317]

(1) Crawford, op.cit., pp.99, 100.
(2) Burton, p.130; Gamitto, I, p.398.
(3) Valdez, II, p.187.
(4) Burton, p.109.
(5) ibid., p.188.
(6) Brelsford, 2, 1947, p.70.
(7) Livingstone, I, p.307.
(8) Crawford, 2, opp.194.
(9) op.cit., p.267.
(10) Moore, 1937.
(11) Valdez, II, p.218.
(12) Gamitto, I, p.386.
(13) Valdez, op.cit., p.246.
(14) Livingstone, op.cit., p.223.
(15) Described in some detail by Moore.

5:Slaski E-4 (no date) 1950 FQ5 Bemba FQ5
Lwapula Peoples

An equally elaborate ritual is practised in connection with salt-making (see above p.85). 317

Certain beliefs and doctrines are of recent origin. The Watch Tower movement (*Fa Chitawala*) which owes its origin to "the incidence of western culture on traditional beliefs, customs and sanctions",(1) is a revivalist movement teaching that before the second coming of Christ Lake Mweru will boil and the Europeans from the district will be thrown into it. The disciples group themselves into separate wards or found their own villages. They cultivate in common and share the produce of their work. The movement has strong political implications, and its adherents refuse to pay tax on the grounds that the Government is resisting the will of God. The Watch Tower flourished openly before the counter-measures applied after the Copperbelt disturbances of 1935. 177 668 795

The *banucapi* movement(2) of witchfinders at one time also gained ground in the valley. It probably originated in the neighbourhood of Lake Nyasa and, like the Watch Tower, incorporates elements of Christian doctrine. 177 795

Greatly feared are the *Banyama* - natives employed by or having contacts with Europeans - who are believed to murder their own countrymen to satisfy white blood-drinkers.

There are six mission stations at present in Kazembe's Kingdom. The Plymouth Brethren have three (at Kawama, Mubende and Johnston Falls), the White Fathers two (at Lufubu and Nsakaluba), and the London Missionary Society one (at Mbereshi). On the Belgian Congo side there is a mission at Kasenga and another at Chisambo. 797

(1) Quick. 1940, pp.216-21. (2) Richards, 1935.